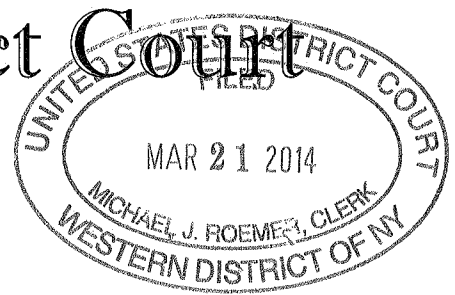


United States District Court

for the
Western District of New York



United States of America

v.

Case No. 14-M-1020

KARONE JOHNSON

Defendant

CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

I, the complainant in this case, state that the following is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

On or about March 20, 2014, in the Western District of New York, the defendant did knowingly and intentionally distribute and possess with intent to distribute 50 grams or more of methamphetamine – a controlled substance - in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1) and 841(b)(1)(A)(viii).

This Criminal Complaint is based on these facts:

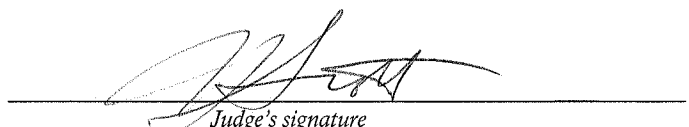
☒ Continued on attached Affidavit.


Complainant's signature

JASON SIUDA, Special Agent HSI
Printed name and title

Sworn to before me and signed in my presence.

Date: March 21, 2014


Judge's signature

City and State: Buffalo, New York

HON. HUGH B. SCOTT
United States Magistrate Judge
Printed name and title

AFFIDAVIT

State of New York)
County of Erie) SS:
City of Buffalo)

I, **JASON SIUDA**, being duly sworn, depose and say as follows:

1. I am employed as a Special Agent with United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement ("ICE"), Homeland Security Investigations ("HSI"), within the Department of Homeland Security ("DHS"). I have been employed as a Special Agent with HSI since August 2009. As part of my duties, I have investigated offenses within the jurisdictional authority of HSI, including crimes related to narcotics smuggling and money laundering. I have been responsible or have participated in the investigation and prosecution of cases involving large scale cocaine, ecstasy and marijuana distribution organizations. I am familiar with how controlled substances are obtained, diluted, packaged, distributed, sold, and used and how drug traffickers use other persons and/or their personal property to facilitate their illegal activities.

2. I make this affidavit in support of a criminal complaint against KARONE AARON JOHNSON, charging him with a violation of Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1) and 841(b)(1)(A)(viii) (distribution and possession with intent to distribute 50 grams or

more of methamphetamine). Because this affidavit is being submitted for the limited purpose of securing a criminal complaint, I have not included every fact known to me concerning this investigation.

3. On March 20, 2014 at or about 6:39 P.M., a Blue Hyundai Tiberon bearing Ontario registered license plate BSNE867 was subjected to an outbound inspection at the Rainbow Bridge Port of Entry (POE) in Niagara Falls, NY. The vehicle was occupied by a passenger and a driver Karone Aaron JOHNSON (XX/XX/1992). Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Officer Brian LaRosa spoke with the driver, Karone JOHNSON, while CBP Officer Michael Taylor spoke to the passenger.

4. JOHNSON told Officer LaRosa that he was returning to his residence in Toronto, Ontario from the Seneca Nation Casino where he and his friend - the passenger - had spent the duration of the afternoon playing slots. JOHNSON stated he had not purchased or acquired any goods or merchandise while in the United States. JOHNSON was explained the monetary reporting requirements for exiting the United States in possession of more than \$10,000.00. JOHNSON stated that he had lost all of his money at the Casino and appeared nervous, avoiding eye contact with Officer LaRosa while he responded.

5. The passenger told Officer Taylor that he went to the casino while in the United States and had not traveled anywhere else, nor had he acquired or purchased any goods. Officer Taylor noticed that as the passenger handed over his passport, his hands were trembling and while speaking his voice was shaky. Due to the nervous behavior of both the passenger and JOHNSON, Officers LaRosa and Taylor determined that a secondary inspection should be conducted on the vehicle that JOHNSON was operating.

6. During the secondary examination of the vehicle, Officer LaRosa and Officer Bush noticed that some of the screws securing a speaker into a speaker box located in the rear cargo hatch area appeared to be newer than others. The speaker was removed from the box revealing three plastic grocery bags inside of the speaker box. Once the grocery bags were removed, five packages containing a hard, off-white crystalline substance were discovered. The substance field tested positive for the properties of methamphetamine using Reagent Test Kit #923. The five packages of suspected methamphetamine had a net weight of 2,387.9 grams. Blue gloves and a screwdriver were also found in the trunk of the vehicle and seized as evidence.

7. At approximately 7:50 P.M. on March 20, 2014, your affiant and Special Agent John Kosich arrived at the Rainbow Bridge Port of Entry. At approximately 8:10 P.M. Special Agent Kosich and your affiant escorted the passenger to a secure interview room on the 2nd floor of the Rainbow Bridge Port of Entry. At approximately 8:12 P.M. Special Agent Kosich completed US Marshals form 312, Personal History of Defendant. At approximately 8:18 P.M., your affiant advised the passenger of his Miranda rights from a preprinted Department of Homeland Security Miranda Rights form as witnessed by Special Agent Kosich. The passenger stated that he fully understood his rights and was willing to speak to investigators. In sum and substance, the passenger stated that he met JOHNSON in September 2013 and both attend culinary school together in Niagara Falls, Canada. He and JOHNSON were both in a class together today (March 20, 2014) that ended at 12:30 P.M. After class, he and JOHNSON agreed to travel to the United States for the purpose of going to the Seneca Nation Casino. Before crossing into the United States, JOHNSON left him at school for the stated purpose of dropping off a female friend and meeting with his cousin. The passenger stayed at school and was with friends until JOHNSON came back to pick him up, which was at approximately 2:30 P.M. according to the passenger. Before traveling to the United States, JOHNSON drove to a Canadian Tire store in Niagara Falls, Ontario and purchased a screwdriver as witnessed

by the passenger. JOHNSON told the passenger that he was purchasing it so he could tighten his subwoofer. After exiting the store, the passenger entered the passenger seat of JOHNSON's vehicle while JOHNSON appeared to go in the back and tighten his subwoofer. After this, JOHNSON and the passenger drove across the Rainbow Bridge into the United States and parked in the parking ramp of the Seneca Nation Casino. The passenger stated that they gambled for approximately an hour and a half inside the casino. During this time, JOHNSON stated to the passenger that he was waiting for his mother to arrive and they could not leave until she showed up. At one point, JOHNSON left the casino, stating his mother was there. The passenger looked on as JOHNSON drove his vehicle to the outside open air parking lot and appeared to meet with an SUV. Shortly thereafter, JOHNSON's blue Hyundai sedan and the unknown SUV departed the open air parking lot and the passenger feared that JOHNSON had left him stranded in the casino. When the passenger encountered JOHNSON several minutes later in the enclosed parking ramp of the casino, JOHNSON told the passenger to get in his Hyundai and they were leaving. The passenger saw the unknown SUV waiting behind JOHNSON's vehicle and asked JOHNSON if he would like to introduce him to his mother, but JOHNSON declined stating that she had upset him. JOHNSON and the passenger departed the casino with the unknown SUV following behind them. JOHNSON and the passenger did not stop anywhere else before

attempting to exit the United States.

8. At approximately 9:02 P.M. on March 20, 2014, Special Agent Kosich and your affiant escorted Karone JOHNSON to a secure interview room on the 2nd floor of the Rainbow Bridge Port of Entry. At approximately 9:04 P.M. Special Agent Kosich completed US Marshals form 312, Personal History of Defendant. At approximately 9:07 P.M., your affiant advised JOHNSON of his Miranda rights from a preprinted Department of Homeland Security Miranda Rights form as witnessed by Special Agent Kosich. JOHNSON stated that he fully understood his rights and was willing to speak to investigators. JOHNSON signed and dated the waiver portion of the preprinted Department of Homeland Security Miranda Rights form, memorializing that he understood his rights and was willing to answer questions without a lawyer present. In sum and substance, JOHNSON stated that he was expecting to be paid \$3,500.00 to bring something illegal across the United States border into Canada. JOHNSON did not know specifically what the substance was, but knew it was bad and assumed it was drugs. JOHNSON explained that earlier in the day, JOHNSON attended class with his friend in Canada and the two agreed to go to the Seneca Nation Casino in Niagara Falls, NY. JOHNSON suggested to his friend that his friend take his own car, but his friend said he didn't want to and asked JOHNSON to come back to school to pick

him up before he crossed into the United States. After class, JOHNSON dropped off a female friend at her house. Then he traveled to the Travel Lodge in Niagara Falls, Ontario and met with a Jamaican male who he had previously arranged to meet with. The Jamaican male informed JOHNSON that he would be paid \$3,500.00 after meeting with a female in Niagara Falls, NY and taking an unknown substance back to Canada with him. He was told by the Jamaican male to park on the 2nd level of the enclosed casino parking ramp. JOHNSON agreed and planned to return to the Travel Lodge after dropping off his friend in Canada at the end of the trip. JOHNSON then proceeded to drive back to his school to pick up his friend. Before crossing back into the United States, JOHNSON stopped at the Canadian Tire store in Niagara Falls, Canada and purchased a box-head screw driver to use on his subwoofer/speaker box. JOHNSON and his friend - the passenger - then crossed into the United States and went directly to the Seneca Nation Casino, parking on the 2nd level of the enclosed parking ramp as he had been instructed to do. JOHNSON and his friend gambled for an hour and a half before his friend wanted to leave and go back to Canada. JOHNSON told his friend he couldn't leave yet because he had to meet his "mother" there, although he knew in fact he would not be meeting with his mother. Eventually, JOHNSON received a text message stating that a female in a dark SUV was waiting outside. JOHNSON left his friend in the casino while JOHNSON drove his blue

Hyundai to the outside open air parking lot of the Seneca Nation Casino and met with a black female driving a dark SUV. JOHNSON and the black female met briefly outside, then JOHNSON and the black female drove their respective vehicles to the first floor of the enclosed casino parking lot ramp. From there, JOHNSON and the black female opened the trunks of their vehicles. The black female wore two blue gloves while JOHNSON wore one blue glove. JOHNSON explained that the black female retrieved several plastic bags from the trunk of her vehicle, and JOHNSON removed one of the speakers from the speaker box and placed the plastic bags filled with an unknown substance into the speaker box before returning the speaker to its proper position. JOHNSON then used his screwdriver to put the previously removed screws back onto the speaker box. JOHNSON removed his glove at one point and handled a portion of either the plastic bag or speaker box with his bare hand, so the black female poured what JOHNSON believed to be vinegar on his hands. JOHNSON then proceeded to drive his vehicle up the ramp for the purpose of picking up his friend, with the black female in the dark SUV following behind him. JOHNSON then proceeded directly to the Rainbow Bridge and intended to reenter Canada. The dark SUV followed him until he was stopped by Customs and Border Protection Officers and she was allowed to proceed ahead.

WHEREFORE, based on the foregoing, I respectfully submit that probable cause exists to believe that, on or about March 20, 2014, in the Western District of New York, **KARONE JOHNSON** did knowingly and intentionally distribute and possess with intent to distribute 50 grams or more of methamphetamine - a controlled substance - in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1) and 841(b)(1)(A)(viii).



JASON SIUDA
Special Agent, Homeland Security
Investigations.

Sworn to before me
this 21st day of March, 2014



HON. HUGH B. SCOTT
United States Magistrate Judge